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PAGE 01 LISBON 02591 221317Z

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00

NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 SAM-01 AF-08

OPIC-03 BIB-01 DHA-02 SCCT-01 IO-13 /088 W

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R 221209Z APR 76

FM AMEMBASSY LISBON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6836

INFO AMEMBASSY BONN

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, PINT, PO

SUBJECT: ELECTIONS: CUNHAL ATTACKS NATO

REF: LISBON 1730 (DTG 171730Z MAR 76)

SUMMARY: AT A RECENT RALLY, COMMUNIST SEC GEN CUNHAL
RAPPED WESTERN INTERFERENCE IN INTERNAL PORTUGUESE
POLITICS AND DENOUNCED ELECTION DAY NATO MANEUVERS OFF
PORTUGAL. HIS REMARKS RECEIVED SCANT PRESS COVERAGE.
END SUMMARY.

1. CUNHAL RAPS WEST, NATO: COMMUNIST SEC GEN ALVARO
CUNHAL AT APRIL 20 RALLY DENOUNCED RECENT STATEMENTS
BY WESTERN LEADERS ON THE UNDESIRABILITY OF COMMUNIST
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PAGE 02 LISBON 02591 221317Z

PARTICIPATION IN NATO MEMBER GOVERNMENTS. SPECIFI-
CALLY REFERRING TO STATEMENTS BY SECRETARY

KISSINGER AND SCHMIDT, CUNHAL RHETORICALLY QUESTIONED WHAT RIGHT FOREIGNERS HAD TO MEDDLE IN INTERNAL PORTUGUESE POLITICS. CUNHAL GLOATED THAT, DESPITE WESTERN PRESSURES, THE PCP HAD BEEN REPRESENTED IN EVERY PORTUGUESE GOVERNMENT SINCE THE APRIL 1974 COUP. HE WENT ON TO DENOUNCE THE HOLDING OF NATO NAVAL MANEUVERS OFF THE COAST OF PORTUGAL ON ELECTION DAY. CUNHAL REPEATED HIS VIEWS ON THE "BAD TASTE" OF APRIL 25 NATO MANEUVERS AT A PRESS CONFERENCE THE FOLLOWING DAY. LISBON PRESS OF APRIL 22 GAVE PROMINENT COVERAGE TO "PRAVDA" ARTICLE WHICH CRITICIZED PS FOR REJECTING ALLIANCE WITH THE PCP, AND CRITICIZED OTHER PARTIES, "INCLUDING THOSE CREATED BY THE CIA," FOR THEIR "PRIMITIVE ANTI-COMMUNISM."

2. RC ON AZORES AND TIMOR: FOLLOWING APRIL 21-22 MEETING, REVOLUTIONARY COUNCIL (RC) RECOMMENDED THAT GOVERNMENT ISSUE DECREE LAW GIVING FORCE TO DRAFT STATUTE ON AZORES PREPARED EARLIER THIS YEAR UNDER AUSPICES OF AZOREAN REGIONAL JUNTA. UNDER CONSTITUTION, RC HAD TO "SANCTION" STATUTE, WHICH DEFINES PARAMETERS OF ISLAND AUTONOMY, AND PASS IT ALONG TO COUNCIL OF MINISTERS FOR FINAL APPROVAL BY APRIL 30. COMMUNIQUE ALSO REPORTED RC'S EXAMINATION OF TIMOR SITUATION AND CONCERN FOR 23 PORTUGUESE PRISONERS STILL BEING HELD IN TIMOR.

3. LOURO REINSTATED: THE PRIME MINISTER ISSUED A STATEMENT APRIL 21 REINSTATING COMMUNIST SECRETARY OF STATE FOR AGRARIAN REFORM VICTOR LOURO, LOURO WAS SUSPENDED MARCH 16 FOR REMARKS INCITING AGRICULTURAL WORKERS TO VIOLENCE TO PROTECT AGRARIAN REFORM (REFTEL). THE INQUIRY CONDUCTED BY THE ATTORNEY GENERAL REPORTEDLY REVEALED THAT LOURO'S REMARKS WERE AN APPEAL TO RESIST A REVERSAL OF AGRARIAN REFORM, BUT NOT AN APPEAL TO VIOLENCE.

4. FAR LEFT FLOATS OTELO FOR PRESIDENT: THE MOVEMENT OF THE SOCIALIST LEFT (ES) MADE A LAST-MINUTE BID FOR VOTES BY STATING THAT MES HAD BEGUN CONTACTS REGARDING A POSSIBLE PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDACY FOR FORMER COPCON COMMANDER OTELO SARAIVA DE CARVALHO. THE REVOLUTIONARY PARTY OF THE PROLETARIAT (PRP), WHICH LIMITED OFFICIAL USE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 03 LISBON 02591 221317Z

IS NOT COMPETING IN THE ASSEMBLY ELECTIONS, QUICKLY PLEDGED ITS SUPPORT FOR OTELO, WHO REMAINS UNDER CONDITIONAL LIBERTY. OTELO'S LAWYER DENIED THAT OTELO HAD ANY RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE MES STATEMENT.

5. COMMENT: THE COMMUNISTS HAVE SOUGHT TO REVIVE ANTI-WESTERN SENTIMENTS ON THE EVE OF THE ELECTION. HOWEVER, CUNHAL'S REMARKS ON NATO RECEIVED MINIMAL PRESS ATTENTION. IN THE CHANGED ATMOSPHERE OF PORTUGAL TODAY, CUNHAL'S COMMENTS ARE UNLIKELY TO

HAVE MUCH IMPACT OUTSIDE COMMUNIST AND FAR LEFT SYMPATHIZERS.
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: POLICIES, ELECTION CANDIDATES, SPEECHES, COMMUNISTS, POLITICAL SITUATION
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 22 APR 1976
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: morefirh
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1976LISBON02591
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D760153-0498
From: LISBON
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1976/newtext/t19760434/aaaabcuc.tel
Line Count: 117
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION EUR
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 76 LISBON 1730
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: morefirh
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 05 FEB 2004
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <05 FEB 2004 by morefirh>; APPROVED <05 FEB 2004 by morefirh>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
04 MAY 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: ELECTIONS: CUNHAL ATTACKS NATO
TAGS: PFOR, PINT, PO, (SUNHAL, ALVARO)
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006